

## Event Matching Makes Its Debut at RideshareOnline.com



Most of us have had the experience of sitting in stalled traffic together with thousands of others after a Mariners game or an event at the Seattle Center. Vanpoolers recognize more than anyone that sharing the ride to work contributes to reduced traffic congestion and a less stressed state of mind. Now, with RideshareOnline.com's Event Matching, you can experience these same benefits on your way to a concert or sports game.

Beginning October 7, 2002, RideshareOnline.com will introduce a new service that will allow event attendees the ability to match with others who want to carpool to a specific event. For those who have used RideshareOnline.com before to find riders for their vanpool, you know how easy it is to logon and register to get a list of interested commuters.

RideshareOnline.com's home page will now have two ridematch choices \*: 'Commute Match', which enables you to find vanpool riders and 'Event Match' which shows you a list of events available for ridematching. You begin the registration process by selecting the event you plan to attend and then entering

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your email address and a password. Initially, RideshareOnline.com Event Matching will concentrate on featuring events with a large attendance to ensure the best match potential.

Unlike Commute Matching, Event Matching registration doesn't require schedule information. This gives you and your potential carpool partners the flexibility to decide on the best arrival and departure times to suit your mutual needs.

Help make event matching a success by using the service to carpool to events or by telling others about it. Don't be discouraged if you don't find matches the first time. Many people go to RideshareOnline.com each day seeking matches and may find your name.

For more information about event matching, go to [www.RideshareOnline.com](http://www.RideshareOnline.com) and click on 'About RideshareOnline' in the menu on the left. If you know of a public event with a large attendance (more than 10,000), you can logon to 'Event Match' and select the 'Contact Us' button on the tool bar to request that the event be added.

\* You need to register separately for Commute and Event matching services. ☼

### **Match to these events and more.....**

- ❖ Husky games
- ❖ Seattle Seahawk games
- ❖ Seattle Sonics games
- ❖ Key Arena concerts & ice skating
- ❖ Tacoma Dome events
- ❖ Pacific Northwest Ballet

### **Future events include:**

- ❖ Seattle Flower and Garden Show
- ❖ Boat Show
- ❖ Home Show
- ❖ Puyallup Fair
- ❖ Pacific Northwest Arts and Craft show
- ❖ Mariners games
- ❖ Other Seattle Center Events



# Rideshare Week 2002 Lends you Wonderful Rider Recruitment Opportunities



Vanpoolers, the best time of year to promote ridesharing is here! October 14 - 18 marks the fifteenth annual Washington State Rideshare Week. There will be lots of messages and information out there at worksites and in the media about vanpooling, carpooling, VanShare and other alternatives to making the commute alone.

If your van has vacant seats, now's the perfect time to distribute 'Ticket to Ride' fliers to anyone and everyone who has even a tiny glimmer of vanpool interest. 'Ticket to Ride' makes it easy for every vanpooler to recruit new riders for the vanpool. Good for up to three days of FREE trial rides in a Metro VanPool, they carry no obligation to join. And the best part is, most who climb aboard with a 'Ticket to Ride' stay! Enclosed is a fresh 'Ticket' for you to duplicate and distribute to other commuters. Or, call 206-625-4500 and we'll quickly send you a new supply.

This is also the best time of year to log-on to RideshareOnline.com to find new riders. More people look for a rideshare in the the Fall than any other season – over 2,000 new match customers in the month of October alone last year. ☼

# VanPool Fare Media Reminder

*Puget Sound transit agencies implemented an integrated regional fare system in the Fall of 1999. The fare system known as Puget Pass exempts use on Metro Vanpools. The Puget Pass cannot be used towards a King County Metro VanPool fare.*

However, Metro developed several options for King County Metro VanPool Program participants who take the bus to meet their vanpool and for those who commute by a combination of bus, ferry and vanpool. The following options remain in effect today.

**Option One:** Vanpool riders whose employers participate in the King County Metro FlexPass Program will continue to apply their FlexPass toward vanpool fares, if the FlexPass agreement includes a vanpool element.

**Option Two:** King County Metro continues to promote Commuter Bonus vouchers to employers as an incentive to employees. These are applicable toward the payment of vanpool fares for King County Metro, Pierce Transit and Community Transit vanpool programs.

**Option Three:** King County Metro produces and sells a monthly Metro-only VanPool/Transit pass. This pass is not transferable. This pass may only be used by the vanpool rider buying it for partial vanpool fare subsidy and for travel on Metro Transit. The pass is available in the familiar one-zone peak or two-zone peak travel on Metro buses, enabling vanpool riders to travel to their vanpool.

**Option Four:** King County Metro vanpoolers using the bus and ferry during their commute may apply the Puget Ship-to-Shore Passes toward their vanpool fare payment. ☼

# New Commuter Centers Make Waves

With the recent installation of Commuter Centers on Washington State Ferry's Central Sound vessels, commuters can now receive updated rideshare information in one convenient location. In addition to ferry schedules and fare booklets, commuters can learn about new rideshare services and incentives with Rideshare Plus, find out how to qualify for Preferential Loading



and read what is new in ridesharing and WSF with the quarterly newsletter *Rideshare Currents*. Central Sound Vanpools that need additional riders are encouraged to contact Julie Paone at 206-263-6088 or julie.paone@metrokc.gov for recruiting and incentive assistance. ☼

# New Weekday Orientation Classes a Hit!

Reward your primary driver with an occasional day off and help make your Vanpool group stronger by becoming a Vanpool driver.

Metro Vanpool is making weekday afternoon and evening classes available so you can keep your Saturday's to yourself. After one short class you could be sticking to your regular vanpool commute instead of frantically piecing together a ride when your primary driver is sick, on vacation, or unable to drive unexpectedly. The

classes are held on designated Wednesdays each month and in different locations throughout King County. Evening classes are from 5:00-8:30 pm, and afternoon classes are usually from 12:30-4:00 pm.

Are you afraid or nervous about taking the class? Then get your entire van together for support and have everyone become backup drivers. With multiple drivers, vanpools can share driving responsibilities to give everyone a break and never again will

you have to worry about that unexpected call telling you that the van is unavailable and you have to drive in rush hour traffic PLUS pay for parking. In addition, most vanpool drivers may be eligible to use the van to run errands during lunch or on the weekend!

Give your Vanpool Representative a call or get a driver application from your vanpool bookkeeper and send it in. Metro will call you and make all the arrangements.

Now sit back, relax and enjoy your Saturdays. ☸

## Meet the Newest Rideshare Operations Staff



*Over the past year, Rideshare Operations has added some new faces to our mix. While you may have had the pleasure of meeting a few of these folks already, we would like to officially introduce you to the new hires.*

### Joy Baldridge – Informations Systems Analyst

Joy works behind-the-scenes to ensure Metro Vanpool's smooth operation. Her experience as a software developer helps Joy keep our systems up and running day in and day out. Joy is one of three Leos that you are about to meet. She loves singing and spending time with her two Basset Hounds – Belanna and Fanny.

### Roger Bruckshen – Risk Specialist

As accident background investigator assistant for Metro Vanpool, we all hope you will never have the pleasure of meeting Roger. His experience as a Real Estate and Telecommunications Manager serves him well in interviewing accident participants and surveying the "scene of the crime." This Leo enjoys remodeling houses, writing short stories at his Pacific Beaches hide-a-way and *swears* he is a "great listener."

### Collette Fidecaro – Risk Specialist

If you became a driver or bookkeeper in the past year, chances are Collette evaluated your application and scheduled you for Vanpool Orientation Class. Under protest, Collette shares that she hails from the accounting industry and enjoys fishing – her largest to date is a 28lb king salmon – and spending quality time with her new grandson "Tubby Butt."

### Jason Halvorson – Vanpool Formations Representative

In the simplest terms, Jason helps King County residents and employees form vanpools. But, since Jason doesn't like being called simple, it's probably best to describe him as a King County Congestion Reducer as he tries to remove from 4 to 14 vehicles from the road with each vanpool he forms. His experience in business development serves him well in promoting vanpools to potential participants. A devout Lord of the Rings fan, he claims to have read the trilogy 52 times and will be mentioned in the closing credits on the DVD.

### Mark Hinthorne – Risk Specialist

Mark files complaints and is responsible for reconciling monthly ridership reports and data entering Participant Agreements for new Vanpoolers. His experience working in Accounts Payable is preparing him for his impending fatherhood (diapers, food, car, tuition...) With the new baby goes the old hobbies of playing racquetball and remodeling the house.

### Josh Nelson – Commuter Service Specialist

Josh is our Jack of All Trades. Formerly in fund development in the Fine Arts, he is one of the folks you may talk to when you need a Ridematch letter, receive an email from when questions about vanpooling arise or see at a Transportation Outreach event. In the rare times we let him out of the office, Josh partakes in the Captain Smartyants Octet for the Seattle Men's Chorus and hopes to visit Hong Kong sometime soon.

### Julie Paone – Rideshare Plus Specialist

Julie helps ferry commuters on the Cross Sound routes explore ridesharing options through our Rideshare Plus program. Formerly a Marketing Manager for a local garden tool company, Julie is quite proud of the fact that she is a Northwest native and has plenty of Gortex to wear for when she is performing outreach on the ferries this winter. She shares a birthday with our second Leo, Roger, and is an amateur photographer who loves pasta putanesca. ☸



# VANPOOL PROFILE

## Keep On Truckin'

The year was 1980. A local peak named Mount Saint Helens greeted summer with a roar. The Seattle Seahawks stumbled through a 4 - 12 season with the only bright spots being

quarterback Jim Zorn and an underrated receiver named Steve Largent. And, Randy Thompson was just getting started as a vanpool driver in a pilot program designed to reduce growing traffic congestion. Well, St. Helens is covered in snow again, though 1,314 feet shorter. That young quarterback is now *coaching* the Seahawks, and the underrated receiver went on to a Hall-of-Fame career and a stint in congress. And Randy? Twenty-two years later, he is still vanpooling in Group 507 and commuting to downtown Seattle from Whidbey Island.

Although St. Helens is slumbering again (as the Seahawks appear to be), the vanpool pilot program that started back in 1979 has gone on to become the nationally recognized Metro Vanpool. Although the region has changed in countless ways over the past two decades, Randy notes that the two biggest changes he has seen in vanpooling are the addition of HOV lanes on the freeways and priority loading for vanpools on the ferries. "Without those," he says, "commuting from Whidbey Island to downtown Seattle would be nearly impossible to put up with."

As you might expect, Randy has seen several passengers come and go during that time period, as well. "We've had an interesting variety of passengers," he says. "Investment bankers, teachers, lawyers, dentists – our group has seen it all." To maintain a successful vanpool over the long haul, Randy believes the participants must be aware of individual differences and work towards ensuring that no one is left feeling like they do not have a voice.

"You need to be flexible and aware of everybody's needs and willing to make decisions based on those needs." As an example, Randy tells the tale of a past passenger who flossed their teeth during the commute. A few members found this to

be discomfoting so the van put it to a vote and the flosser was asked to find other arrangements for their daily flossing. Randy contends that dealing with situations such as this as a group leads to a stronger, more close-knit, group.

All in all, Randy is pleased with the success of his group over the years. He says, "The best thing is that it makes commuting more reasonable. It's convenient. It's efficient and it makes you feel like you're trying to do your part. Every day we reduce at least 10 vehicles off the ferry." He

also mentions that having a vanpool to catch is his secret weapon to leaving on time every day. "Our group makes catching the 5:30 ferry an aggressive goal. That means I have to leave on time. It gives me a reason not to take that last call of the day as I'm heading out the door." ☼



*VanPools lined up to take advantage of Washington State Ferry's*

*On our website:  
VanPool Riders Wanted Bulletin  
<http://transit.metrokc.gov>*

## VANPOOL VOICES

**If you have questions, comments or story ideas, send them to: Rideshare Operations, YES-TR-0700, King County Metro, 400 Yesler Way, Seattle WA 98104, call (206) 263-4445 or write [cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov](mailto:cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov).**

**[www.RideshareOnline.com](http://www.RideshareOnline.com)**